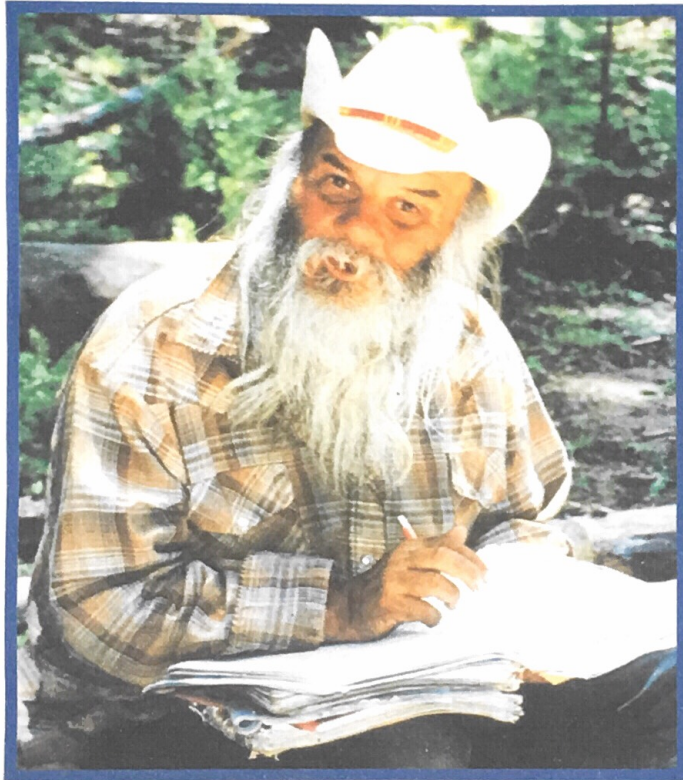




# Rainbow Family

## Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.  
Interviews with Rainbow  
Family of Living Light  
folks conducted between  
1977 and 2008.  
Scanned in 2018.  
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contacted on Facebook.*

04.P PHIL COYOTE - "I'm History and  
I'm a Tramp"

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raised different from the Indians. We don't have strong family ties, we don't have any strong culture like the Chicanos or the blacks or the Indians. It's all mass produced. We're not raised to understand the harmony and the balance of the earth the way the Indians are. If a white man is going to use peyote at all, he should go out in the country and try to discover the connection with the earth that he has forgotten before he tries to attend Indian ceremonies. That's what it takes before you can understand the customs of tribal peoples. White culture is Nestle's Quick, thermonuclear weapons, Put a Tiger in Your Tank, Sergeant Rock, Walt Disney, Mickey Mouse. And don't forget concrete, salute the flag.

I learned the hard way about misusing peyote I will respect it all my life. I will respect the Native American people all my life. And through my white foolishness and ego, which I burnt out, I have a greater respect for peyote than I ever have. Also I'm sure damn grateful to be alive. God loves us, no matter what we've done.

A bunch of people surrounded us at Desert House and told us to leave. It happens all the time like that. I went on an old school bus with Morning Star, Carrie and Lalenya and we stayed outside of Las Vegas with this lady who was an old girlfriend of Sun Bear and put us up for a couple of weeks and we partied and recuperated. Her father was a millionaire and she had a big home and a Mercedes Benz. We went to Tempe, Arizona. I got off the bus and started doing the circuit all around the country like crazy again. I was drinking again. Pretty soon I ended up in Montana at Barry's place to get ready for the 1976 Gathering. A whole bunch of us ended up there. I cut down on drinking.

Nothing was happening when I got there, but as usual Bear was there waiting for it to happen. Me and Bear and Peanut was there early. We had to stay alive, so we were gambling—playing five card stud poker. After a while we were winning and we were losing. One day we had the money, next day we didn't. We bought new Levis and cowboy shirts and cowboy boots. After a while, I couldn't handle the trip. I got on my dirty old ragged clothes. I went to Barry's place. Tony Angel was there. Kilo and Antoinette No Guns showed up. She split. Kilo arrived with a whole bunch of eagle feathers from a bird that had died years ago. A man in New Mexico gave them to Kilo.



and he gave them to us.

Barry's house got fired into and his mailbox got shot up. We went on a live television show in Kalispel. We showed slides of former gatherings and explained basically what it was about. We answered phone calls for three hours. The phone call I got was, "I hate you and I hope you all die and I hope the bears have cast iron stomachs when they eat you."

And the announcer said, "We refrain from supporting either side." It was a successful show - got a bigger rating than any show in the history of the Kalispel area. It surprised me that people were so upset about our slit latrines, which go into the earth and are covered with earth and ashes, when they line with permanent ones and flush it into their rivers that they're supposed to drink from. I wrote letters to the press about the gathering. So did Dominic.

Me and Dominic had an idea - here's what the newspaper articles about us were like. Some lady wrote, "I think they're all Manson cultists waiting for him to get out of jail," and the headline on that was "Rainbow-Manson Link." It was a bunch of lies. This whole society is based on lies. So we decided to invite the PTA and everybody in town to a big dinner, but we blew it.

I have a lot of dreams of the future that happen. I have that gift from the Great Spirit. I had a dream the night before the dinner that me and Dominic went to town and Kilo stepped up and said "Hey, let's do this," and three women stepped up and Kilo disappeared.

So me and Dominic and Kilo went into Kalispel to do everybody's laundry. We cruised the park to find some smoke. We were invited by some local kids to a kegger. There goes that old weakness for booze again. It brings out the old STP in me. Kilo said, "Let's go to the kegger." Me and Dominic didn't want to go. We had the laundry to do and the dinner for the townspeople. But we gave in. We got really drunk. We were spitting on each other and throwing beer on each other - pissing in the park. We were throwing big rocks at each other. Then we got back in the truck and went back to the laundry. We started to go



home to Barry's. Kilo wanted to go to this girl out by Swan Lake to burn \$15 so we could get drunker. We said no, but he was driving and said he'd make us walk if we didn't go with him, so we went. So we ended up looking for her place at night and couldn't find it. We were looking for a group of cabins. We went through the grass of a group of hotels and woke up about a hundred bicyclists who were staying there. They were all mad.

We tried to explain, but we were too drunk. They wouldn't listen and they kept yelling. Finally Dominic got down on his hands and knees and started kissing their feet. And they started kicking him and hitting him.

And so Kilo was ready to fight, I was just about ready, too. Kilo grabbed one of them and pushed him up against the truck and said, "You stop hitting that old man."

Finally, the hotel owner towed us out with a cable. So we started heading down the road back to camp at Barry's. And Kilo said, "I'm going to Missoula," and we said, "No, Kilo," and he pushed me in the face and I punched him and the truck went off the road. The cops came and took Kilo away and left me and Dominic alone. Dominic says to me, "Try and find somebody with a cable."

So I got a ride to this bar.

When I got there, three women almost raped me - these crazy hippie ladies going, "Hey, look at this one." I wasn't complaining. They weren't bad looking. And then they came back with the guy with the cable. They stayed with us. So we just picked up on the vibe and we took them home and made love all night and woke up to breakfast and pot and a ride to Barry's at two o'clock the next day. Everybody was there with their arms folded. They couldn't go get any water without us, so they couldn't make the food for the towns people. They didn't have their clean clothes and they didn't know if we were dead or alive. And the radio said, "Rainbow Family member incarcerated."

Dominic and me were so ashamed, we went to the Blackfoot Reservation in disgrace. We went there to invite the Indian people to the gathering, because we always invite the Indians. They were here first. I'm just a guest. If I had my way, I'd put an Indian in the White House. When we got to Browning on the reservation, I was surrounded by FBI, Sheriff's Department, Bureau of Indian Affairs, State Police, Department of the Interior, reservation police asking, "Are you from the Rainbow Family? What are you doing? Do you have



any ID? We don't want you here."

We were hanging out by the Indian Cultural Center. It was here we met Police Chief Arrow Top and Thomas Medicine Horse of the Bureau of Indian Affairs who was a Crow Indian who ran the Blackfoot Reservation for the US government. They told us to leave the reservation by sundown. We tried to explain what we were there for, but they wouldn't listen to us. We went into the Cultural Center and met Wilbur Fish and made friends with him. He said, "You guys come with me and we'll hide you out on the reservation. He had long hair, so did we. He liked living out doors, so did we. And he wore moccasins and so did we. He took us to Paul Many Hides' place, an old shack out by Red Blanket Hill where the bones of Chief White Wolf and the warrior Red Blanket were left long ago.

Paul Many Hides said, "Everything in my house is yours. My door is always open." That's the way the Indians believed. Every Indian I've ever seen that kept to their old ways has been that way. They say "Never lock your door. You never know who is coming." I stayed there for about three weeks. I learned how to speak some Blackfoot. I learned to make fry bread. They always make it with white flour. I wouldn't make it no other way. I thought about having a vision quest, but I was too discouraged and I wasn't together enough.

One day all these Indians came and started a big bonfire. They cooked wieners and cheese and called us over to eat with them. And they would feel insulted if we refused. Then Police Chief Arrow Top came up in his brown pickup to take us away. And all these Indians took out their rifles and started firing at tin cans. Then they shot over Arrow Top's pickup and he left fast.

Then I left the reservation and went all around Kalispel and Missoula. Some of us had a camp north of Missoula. Finally we started looking for Barry and then found they were camped near Choteau. So me and this black brother went hitch hiking looking for the gathering. We got to this little town and it rained. Lightning almost struck us and no rides would come. We walked in this real red neck restaurant and this lady who owned the place invited us in back for venison and coffee and gave us dry sleeping bags and a place to stay for the night. She did it because we



were human beings, she said. It happens all the time.

Eventually I found the Family at the Bear Creek camp near Chateau. The National Forest people offered the Family a choice of the two forks of the Teton River. We chose the Jones Creek Fork because it looked like it needed healing. It had been through a flood and a fire and a flood. The gathering happened. It was beautiful. I can't tell you half of the beautiful things that happened. We left it clean. The land made a 60% recovery from the fire and floods after we left, and they had been trying to heal it for years and couldn't.

At the gathering I got to meet Adolph Hungry Wolf. I had been reading his Good Medicine books for years. We took some sweats together. I try to remember him in my prayers, like I try to remember in my prayers the Native American Church and the Rainbow Family. I pray for world leaders. I pray for them all. I love life. It's too bad life don't love me - the human part of it don't.

I didn't leave on the bus caravan after the gathering. I had a dream about Don Moser's Uncle Ben bus turning over. I dreamed it when I took my medicine bag and put it under my head. There were two winktes - Sioux for transsexuals - who were on the Uncle Ben bus. They were also heyokas, which means backwards people, nutty. They were touched by the Great Spirit. It was their energy that turned over the bus. Once Barry left Bear with no food, no money, in the mountains. Right after that, Barry's bus rolled.

Me and Michael, Kilo, Marsha, Bear, Peanut and assorted others went out west. I hitched in circles around Washington state with Kilo until we found where the Family was camped by Lake Adeline. We did lots of sweats, lots of prayer. We did one sweat where we screwed up - thinking we know what we don't know. That's a heavy one. It happens because we don't have elders to show us what to do. It's the same thing about peyote - we don't have elders. This is the beginning of the purification. It will be over by 1982 when the planets all line up with the earth. There's supposed to be a nuclear war. The walls will crumble and the machines will stop. From what I know of the Hopi prophecy, it won't be a pleasant experience for a lot of people. After that, the humble and the meek will inherit the earth. The survivors will be strong and from them will rise a united world - one tribe for all the earth. But I think there will be a lot of death before there's life.



At the Montana Gathering, Chuck Wind Song was up tight that the Stone of Many Faces was being kept wrapped up by Barry and Garrick and not shown to anybody in the Family. So Chuck took it. There was a big stack of money next to it and Chuck didn't take any of it. So everybody knew it was Chuck. It had to be Family that would take the stone and not the money. He went to the medicine fields and they were flooded. The Stone almost drove him crazy. He nearly threw it in the river. Birdie, his trucking partner, she stopped him. She said, "No, Chuck!" And he went up to Lake Adeline and gave the Stone to me to show to people. I took it around and it almost drove me crazy. I carried the Stone many, many miles.

We left Lake Adeline and went to the healing gathering on Rosetta's land at Chelan, Washington. Her organization is called Summit Lighthouse, and they wanted \$10 a head to come in. We drove up and said, "We're Rainbow Family and we don't have any money." They let us in. But more people got sick there than got healed. It's like one guy came to the Montana Gathering to sell dope and he wouldn't share it and his tipi blew down. I can see the connection. There are plenty of cities to sell stuff in.

We left Chelan and headed to New Mexico on White Bird, a truck. On the way, we went to the Crow Indian powwow. I got off in Texas. The White Bird went on to Texas. I probably was drinking again, trying to kill my pain. I think I went out West. I went so many times around the country, I don't remember. It dings me out. Well, I know what's happening right now. The modern world just drove me out of my mind—it's that simple. Cause I could see what's happening and it frightened me.

I went to Michoacán, Mexico, with Kilo and some other people. I had the Stone. We stopped in the medicine fields in Mexico and I used medicine around the Stone. That's one of the mistakes I made with the medicine. Now I know a lot better than I ever did about it. I didn't even have my peyote songs right at that time. I felt like leaving and I left with the van. The people who stayed in Mexico went to jail. I gave the Stone to Kilo in Mexico. I didn't bring it back with me. Rose, who's rich, got him out of jail and he came back to this country with the Stone.



I made more boo-boos. I hitched back to Santa Fe from Texas and stayed in a house on Oriate Street. And then me and this lady got it on. We went to LA and stayed with my mother and my aunt and her daughter. And I got kind of paranoid because the lady was underage. Then my aunt died and I inherited \$300 and took some of it and had the rest sent to Crazy John in Eugene. We ended up staying in a house together and I ended up in some negative head spaces, the old STP, that's how we react on each other. Quite a bit of the real Family is ex-STP Family anyway. You have to know what it's like on bottom to help people.

We stayed in a house the Family rented. They rented two or three others with my money and John's money and Sun Dance's money. We bought lots of beer, lots of herb. I gave away lots of money to poor people and helped pay the rent on the place. I gave \$350 to Buckwheat and a school bus of people along with a quarter pound of herb. I didn't expect nothing back because I know that's what Jesus wants me to do. I know I have a place in Heaven waiting for me.

Finally I was broke and it felt good-penniless like I like to be. I went to Berkeley after that for the millionth time. On the way, I dreamed I saw three owls and a hawk. I knew that was a warning from the Great Spirit that I would face death. In Berkeley, first I got bit by a dog. Then I almost got busted. Then I almost drank a piece of broken glass in my drink. I could have been killed. I could have sued the owner of the place, but who's gonna believe a tramp? I've been in jail too many times, more than I can count, and if you got money, you get out easy. If you're poor, you sit.

I've been in juvenile halls—the first time in Covina, California, then Fort Smith, Arkansas, Reno, Nevada, Arcata, California, Berkeley, California, Eugene, Oregon, Medford, Oregon, and I wasn't stealing or hurting anyone. I've been in adult jail in Berkeley twice, once for sleeping in abandoned houses, another time for drunk and disorderly, inciting a riot, assaulting police officers, resisting arrest and disturbing the peace. I was minding my business in a restaurant and they dragged me out by my hair and beat up on me, and I defended myself. I got off because I had a good public defender. I was in jail in Wenatchee, Washington, for being one of eight drinking beer. They took all the money I worked and slaved for in the raspberry fields with my friends, the people from Mexico. I had been planning to buy a tipi.



They didn't even advise me of my rights. I went to jail in Eugene for panhandling. I went to jail in Tucson for trespassing. All I was doing was eating my Doritos and my Coca Cola sitting on the steps of a 7-11. People don't have any mercy in this world. That's why I've been made afraid. And I've been in jail for other assorted things. I hitched a ride in a car that happened to be stolen.

I want to say to the American people - I do not steal, I do not hurt anyone. There is nothing anyone has in this whole country or this whole world that I want. All I want is to sit somewhere and plant some corn. But I never will fight your wars and I won't work nine to five. And even if you kill me, you can't stop me from being free because God made us all to be free as long as we aren't hurting anyone else. I don't believe in any government but God's government. America will fall. Russia will fall. China will fall. All your nations are as good as dead. Your cities will be dust and your gold and silver will be rust. But the mountains and the earth will endure forever.

I went to Bisbee, Arizona, and Debbie, a woman I was in love with, wanted to see me. I came up to Albuquerque and got her. We drove to Winslow, Arizona, and we stayed in a hogman out by the Navajo Reservation. We ate medicine and went out to an old circle of stone. We set and felt the earth and vomited our sins in different places away from there, and I found out the purification is happening right now and we're in for a lot heavier than we know, because man does not understand the ground on which he walks. We went to Verde Hot Springs near Tucson. We broke up, then came back together.

I took Debbie to a peyote meeting with the Indians at Taos. I felt bad about it later on. I should have listened to the old Indian who tried to teach me, but I was too young to understand. He's passed away now. I looked up to him like my grandfather. I used to go in homeless to his house and he'd tell me stories. He had a big fat wife named Adrienne who's Jewish. They used to feed me. I loved him a lot. I spent the night in his old house before the meeting. A big double rainbow came out



that morning.

When I went to the meeting with Debbie, I was confronted by the old people with my mistakes and I tried to hide them, but it came out. And I told an old man that I had tried to take things in my own hands and I told him to pray for me. I've felt bad about it ever since. There's a saying, "He who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted." So now I'm on the bottom. The only way I can go is up. I've already been in hell. I'm through feeling bad about the past, because it's over. The old Indian told me, "No mistake, no learn."

I broke up with Debbie and went to where I was invited to some land. I took off my vest covered with beadwork and buried it. I took off my medicine bag and buried it. All the things that meant something to me, I buried them. Then I hit the road again. I planted corn and beans in Spring, 1977, with some people near San Ysidro, New Mexico.

In March, 1977, I went to Austin and sold Kilo and we sold a lot of Oaxacan. We snorted a lot of coke, drank a lot of whiskey. Kilo was beating his wife. I decided the Stone shouldn't be with Kilo so I gave it to Pip.

I had this dream that I seen Albuquerque blow up in a nuclear cloud. And I dreamed the missiles were on their way. I feel like a deer, like an eagle that everyone's been shooting at. I feel like a redwood and people are coming with chain saws to get me. I feel so much fear of people from being on the road, it's hard to get rid of. The Rainbow Family is the people I trust.

At the New Mexico Gathering, I almost put on a white sheet and joined the Christ Family - the ones who say no killing, no sex and no materialism. Because when you're close to the earth, you see the animals, they're so scared, they know what man is doing. And if you protest, people want to lock you in a cage or kill you. What I like about the Christ Family was they lived in a cave at the gathering and they had a little bird in a nest there with them and a rattlesnake nearby that didn't bother nobody until somebody else killed it. I dug them because they're on the road all the time. They don't hitch, they just walk. I share one thing in common with the Christ Family - we're scared. I don't feel like judging them. I don't know what kept me from joining them. I wasn't sure whether or not they were false prophets. Their way looked like a way to break out of



the cycle of life and death. But they're too fanatical. I don't feel like putting on a sheet and being a fanatic. I got too much faith in life for that. I'm a fanatic about following my own heart. 295  
 I freaked out and burned all my leather and quit eating meat. I threw away my shoes and took my Christ Family blanket on my shoulder. But I didn't get to the robe, thank goodness. I couldn't handle the celibacy bit. They don't say hi to nobody or embrace nobody. They act half

dead. They've cut off all their emotions. Finally I got back to my old self at the gathering. I was eating roast beef at the security camp.

Pip brought the Stone from Oklahoma and eventually set it down in a lodge at the gathering in New Mexico. Pip told me, "I carried that thing in. It's driving me crazy. I'm not carrying it out." So when the lodge was taken down, I went to the security camp. Panama Red and Calamity Jane had the Stone. I decided they shouldn't have it. I took it away before their eyes. After the gathering, I took it to Santa Fe and gave it to Chuck Wind Song. I haven't seen it since, but I know it's in good hands.

Then Santiago and I decided to go to California. We hitched a ride with a guy who was going to El Paso, but was out of his way. So we went to El Paso, then Austin and saw Raunchy Ron and people. Then we went to Gainesville, Florida and picked up the Rainbow Family's Peace Village crew. After their trip at Velarde, New Mexico, they went to Florida to look for a 1977 Christmas gathering site, which they never found. We went to Key West and I hung out with Don Moser's daughter, Arrow, there. Then after three weeks there, I headed back to New Mexico, then left for Oregon. I spent the winter with Crazy John and all them other crazies. I went to Washington and hung out at Flowering Tree Commune.

I almost joined the Love Family, but something seemed rotten in Denmark about it. Do you know what's heavy about the Love Family? Everybody works their ass off but Love Israel and he just walks around. He stands up in the sanctuary and says, "Have you seen Christ? Have you seen God the



Father?" Everybody raised their hands and I did too, because I was like a scared rabbit, I was so deceived.

I was going to be baptized into the Love Family. I was so serious, I was almost in tears, but they wouldn't do it. Well, God deliver me from them! Their whole brainwash trip is almost like the CIA. They said God told them to huff Telvone once. It's heavy shit. They called it Tells You All. All their clothes have to be spic and span. They're so clean in the Love Family. You can't wear shoes in their houses. They don't have a speck of dirt in them - nothing of the earth.

And they wash their dishes three times each in Clorox. I came down with hepatitis there where it was so clean. But as soon as I went back on the road, back to the earth, I got well again.

Then I ran into a friend named Swie and her friend Melody. They hadn't been on the road long. I related to them like family, but I found out, especially with Melody, there wasn't the gypsy spirit of "Let's go!" They didn't know the ropes of the road. I came with Swie to Santa Fe. There's hop for her.

I quit drinking. The government wants us to get drunk and be fools. And the alcohol vibe scares away the mellow sisters. Road people are like Indians when they drink. We're all crazy, so it don't help us none. When you eat medicine, you get more together. Alcohol makes you too loose.

Right now, I don't know where I'm going. I'm not even sure where I'm going to sleep in this town tonight, but I'm not worried about us. All of us on the road, we've had a prayer in our hearts. We haven't had much, but we've given it to help people when we did. We've fought a good fight and we ain't about to give up.

[At the Oregon Gathering, a little over a month later, Phil added some more to his story.]

I wasn't even going to come to the gathering this year, but the first thing you know, man, the Spirit gave me a ride from that doorstep to this doorstep. And I'm just grateful to be here at the gathering in Oregon.

Now I sit drinking coffee, recollecting the Colorado Gathering in 1972. I was going through a lot of changes there. A lot of us were discovering who we were and getting to know each other. As time goes on, things get easier as far as pulling the gatherings off, but as far as between



The gatherings-things get rougher on our migrations.

I'm tired of interstate highways. I'm tired of crying out, of coming to the Family's camp at gatherings - and then we scatter like crows. We're growing up. We can't set up a tipi with just a few poles. You need a lot to make it round. You can't make it all scattered. But I pray for the Rainbow Family wherever they wander.

There are people at the gatherings who claim to be medicine men and they don't know. They're from the suburbs. I like to listen to someone talk if they know what they're talking about. Some of these people ain't got no idea. Most of the spiritual trips I hear people talk about, they just go in one car and out the other. I don't believe in astrology or the occult. I don't know. None of us know. Only God knows. I realize now that was what the elders was trying to tell me before I made those mistakes with peyote. They said - just be what you are and don't pretend to know what you don't know.

It's time for us to become more centered. Take life more sacred. Live closer to the ground. Don't just space out on a lot of cosmic boo-bah. Anyway, God bless everybody. Everybody pray for the earth, for yourself and your loved ones and all the people on th earth and good things will happen if you pray with good in your heart. Everybody close to my heart, we must unite those who feel to be serious, close to the Mother. The time is coming soon when the gatherings will come to an end. We're going to have to make it wherever we are. The further we go, the harder it will get. Those who are sincere will be guided to the place to live right. We will all make it there.

If we all take care of our Mother, she will take care of us. The purifier is coming and I'm almost scared to say this. I am only a young man. But all we've seen, felt, heard, touched is true.

[I met up with Phil at the Peace Camp in the California desert in February, 1979. He said he wanted to add some



move to his life story—as follows.]

The Stone has disappeared. Birdie was carrying it in her back pack and while she was asleep, somebody ripped off the pack. I'm glad the Stone is gone. When I was carrying it, once I dreamed me and Chuck opened up the Stone to see if we could find a treasure and we found a skull.

After the Oregon Gathering, a lot of good things happened. I got to visit the Flowering Tree people on a river in Oregon. I went to the Peace Camp at Ashland, Oregon. I didn't like it—it was mostly dudes. I got to see our films of the gathering made by Flow Productions by Mark White Buffalo. I don't like the way he's using the films for business. The films should be shown free of charge.

Then I met up with Little Wolf at Cougar Reservoir. At the time I was in love with Cactus Seaweed. Coyotes and Cactuses go good together. She got sick and had to go to the hospital with pneumonia. But I went to the Love Family and got kicked out again. Six of them carried me out. They threatened to call the police. They threw us out because we were dirty and smoked cigarets.

Then I went to Spring Creek near the Canadian border. Then I went to a beautiful Indian spiritual gathering in Canada at Spotted Lake. They sang a lot of old songs. The medicine man was called Rainbow Watcher. I had to walk back into the US.

Then I split down and picked fruit—hung out with some of the Family. Then I went to New Mexico—met up with Susie again. Then a bunch of us split with a bunch of LSD to the Gulf of Mexico. We went to Laredo—drank a lot of whiskey, had a beautiful gypsy circus. Then I went to visit my folks, then came back to this Peace Camp in California.

I had a rough year this year—learning to live with myself. There's always more to my life story, because I'm alive, ain't I? I want a happy ending. We're gonna have a beautiful gathering site this year in Arizona. We are guided by the Spirit.

It seems now we have more faith. Blessings are daily. Guided, all of us will ride together physically as well as we do now spiritually.



Things are always changing always for the better. That's the message we must be.

May our paths be beautiful.

[The deaths of two people very close to Phil - Bear and Kito - happened in the winter of 1978-79. I have put Phil's account of Bear's death in with Peanut's life story in the STP section of this book.

In April, 1979, there was a council near Luna, New Mexico, to plan for the Arizona Gathering. One of the main problems brought up was the behavior of the people in Shanti Sena - Security Camp, where Phil usually hung out at each gathering. According to Barry, "We had to get rid of rip-offs, scammers, alcohol energy."

Tony Angel of Shanti Sena was indignant at this severe criticism of himself and his friends in Security Camp. As he told me that summer at the Arizona Gathering, "Sure our Shanti Sena Family drinks some, but how many riots have we kept from happening at the gatherings? How much food have we brought in? Yet everywhere they keep bad-rapping our family and it makes me want to go to war."

I hitched with Phil from Austin to El Paso in November, 1979, and we split up there and didn't see each other again until the 1984 California Gathering. After the gathering, Phil told me about what he had been doing for the last five years, starting with the Luna Council. I

What it was, was the Security Camp people had gotten together outside of Luna. Some people held a council and confronted us with accusations of stealing-lying-conning. I found it ironic that Toufan was on their puppet jury. Certain of the "jury" slept with machetes and knives and threatened us with bodily harm and we didn't do anything but just camp away from them and eat meat. They didn't do shit at the council. We were just petty thieves - nothing



dangerous. It doesn't exist any more. Of course it was wrong, but the people who were into it have straightened out and are now living pretty moral lives.

At the Arizona Gathering, Crazy John and myself and Vicki Golden Bear camped with Peter the Prophet. Vicki put on a blue robe for Peter's trip. Peter the Prophet was in the Christ Family and he left because he didn't agree with Lightning Amen, the Christ Family founder. Peter was more fundamentalist than Lightning Amen.

We were sincere about Peter the Prophet-somewhat. It was mostly theatrics. Maybe I went through something. I didn't last long at that one-three days. I got out when I saw two good-looking women in a trip. One look and I knew... I slept with one of them once and hung out with the other one for about a week.

I was the first one to find the meadow for the moment of silence at the gathering. I saw four eagles above the meadow. I found a nice place for Security Camp. It was a real nice family feeling up at the camp. People in Security Camp were still doing things but you can say whatever bad you want to about us, but we were really tight with each other. We cared about each other. We were the only people at the gathering who really did it all year. We were on the road all the time. None of the rest of the people stayed on the road. They went back to their straight jobs, so we couldn't relate to them. Now that we're older and we've had jobs, we see things different.

Most of the people I hung out with in Security Camp were former STP people. We had a good time. We had hash oil. Our camp was in the gathering parade under the name Gypsies for Jesus. We had a nice camp-a clean camp. Tony Angel was there-Candy-Maria-Freedom-Crazy John-Rose-Hallelujah-Chuck Williams-Patty and others. One of the funniest things that happened at the Arizona Gathering was when Love Israel came to Security Camp with his people and sat around with them looking all holy. It was like our camp was the vacation spot for the Rainbow elite-where they came to get away from the gathering. We fed anybody who was hungry.



I felt supply at Arizona was terrible. There were people at supply who were bogarting for their own needs - Carlos specifically. We were forced to steal to take care of the needs of the kids in Security Camp. I never steal now. My philosophy is try and do the best you can. Think the right thoughts. Do the right deeds.

After the gathering, I went with Chuck Windson and Patty to Santa Fe. We got our pass ports and food stamps. We stayed with the Christ Brotherhood for a month and a half. We were in their mansion - a huge mansion. We dosed them all on LSD. It was our attempt to take over their cult - just for the hell of it - loosen it up. It worked for two days. These people got so stoned they couldn't do anything. One of their people stared at a rug for two hours. These people couldn't hold their mud. Patterson turned into a total wimp. They couldn't chop their wood, so Chuck and me had to break it up for them.

The Christ Brotherhood tried to set Chuck Windson against Patty. That's one of their tactics - splitting up couples. Chuck almost got converted. But I don't trust the Christ Brotherhood. I had seen too many sides of them. I had seen them tell people to give their things away to the poor and then the Christ Brotherhood would take their possessions and throw the people out on the street after taking the things they needed to survive with.

Shortly after that, I was up in Taos. Adrienne, the widow of the old Indian peyote man, put me up for about a month. I joined a Pentecostal church there called the Christian Family Church. The pastor's name was Bush. I got baptized. It was like theater. They took me to Santa Fe - baptized me at the Assembly of God church. The guy's voice was like a Praise-a-thon. He'd say, "Do you believe in Jesus?" He said the words in a theatrical voice as he put me under the water. It was like showbiz. I noticed it right off the bat, but I didn't pay attention to it.

Disillusioned with that church as I was, I headed west. I got to L.A. I met a woman named Jane Zenas at the bus station in L.A. We smoked pot and ate olives all the way to Santa Barbara. After a three-day



love affair, I hitched up the coast to Berkeley. I met Crazy John at the Earth People's Park house. He had bunch of bunk acid printed up. He gave me some and I sold bunk acid and bunk hash all the way to Seattle. In Seattle I quit doing it. My basic philosophy is the Golden Rule - treat others the way you'd have them treat you. Now I try to walk honestly - but some people said they got stoned on the bunk hash.

I stayed with the Love Family for about two weeks and then I headed over to Montana. When I got there, there was a big Rainbow meeting just outside of Missoula - Uncle Billy and all these people. I walked into the welfare office to see about a job, and that's where I met Tamara. She asked me if I needed a place to stay and I said yes. I just moved in with her. When we got together, she already had a little girl. We took off to Idaho for a little while and stayed at God's Garden, a hippie commune, and came back to Missoula. By then Tamara was pregnant. We wintered in Missoula.

In January, 1981, we had the big council on where the Washington Gathering was to be and everybody showed up at my house. Barry was there and Courage from the Love Family. Garrick, Chuck WindSong, Patty, Michael John - the whole entourage. We smoked about an ounce of purple bud a day during that council and I always had coffee cooking.

The Idaho Gathering was my idea before the Washington Gathering because I had a store with the inscription on it "18 Idaho Queen." So I went up to Barry and Garrick with a map of Idaho and said, "This is the only western state we haven't hit yet." I found a place on the map named Council and a place named White Bird and Rainbow Peak. So everybody thought Idaho was a good idea, being as Michael John was there in McCall, Idaho.

After that I started dealing pure LSD. I 1,000 hits at that time. Sometime in 1981, Patterson came up and was checking out Missoula. He showed up at this free concert in the park. So Chuck WindSong and me were at the concert and we figured this was a good time to get Patterson. We put eight hits of LSD in a jug of water and sat down next to Patterson and pretended to be thirsty. I pretended that I took a drink and then we smiled at Patterson and passed him the



jug. Of course it was a big mistake, because him and his friend drank that whole jug, LSD and all. He's at blown out under the tree long after the concert and it was then that he made the decision to move to Montana. They moved the whole Christ Brotherhood crew up there.

We had the baby in June, 1981. We named her Julia Mary Morning Bird. Then Chuck Windson and me and Barry and some people headed out to Washington in my four wheel drive to look for a gathering site.

One time we were coming down the road and the gas tank wasn't on good and it fell off. Right behind us was a plain clothes police officer disguised as a cowboy. He got out and said, "Do you need any help?"

We were lucky he was there.

Finally I decided I was moving to Tenasket, Washington. I loaded up my 18-foot tipi. I loaded everything I owned in my jeep and headed over there. I went to Uncle Billy's land and he wasn't there, so I set up my lodge anyway. I was coming back to the tipi. I had been drinking a little. I let this guy who was drunk drive my jeep, which was a big mistake. He crashed it into a big rock. That was the end of the jeep. I hit the windshield. I almost got killed. Billy Shawn was in the back seat. He smashed his chest. The guy who was driving lost some teeth. So Billy Shawn gave us a ride to Cecile Creek and we set up our lodge there. I traded the tipi to a lady up there for a one-ton truck. I met this old friend named Joe who had some land outside of Tenasket. We moved there and I had to trade the truck for a station wagon.

Tamara got sick and I had to rush her to the hospital. Then she was all right. But I blew the rings in the car and I didn't know it. We were going back to New Mexico and we loaded the stuff in the car. The car broke down in Okanogan and we ended up with our stuff in a pile in the dirt in a fruit picker's cabin. We got a ride back up to Tenasket and we were both sick. We ended up at Joe's land again. Finally I got a trailer for \$150 a month and we moved near Tenasket. Then the Rainbow Family found out where I was and they set up their



pre-seed camp there and had a big council there.

It was at that time that I converted to Christianity. It was at night. Tamara did too. We both became Christians. I ended up going to Vicki Golden Bear's with Tamara. Vicki was a Christian. We worked for a Christian man named Bob Krantz. After we worked for him, we worked for a friend of his named Bob Monroe. Bob Monroe insisted that I marry Tamara. So we got married.

I started going to Bible studies with Bob Monroe at the Calvary Chapel Charismatic Church. At a picker's cabin that belonged to Bob Monroe, I started speaking in tongues. I thought it meant a lot. Finally I made enough money to get an old Ford Galaxy 500 and after doing different jobs and living in different picker shacks, I started going to these pentecostal meetings at a place called the Glass House and started going to the NewLife Center in Okanogan. At the Glass House we would smoke cigarettes, drink coffee and criticize everybody else that was going to hell.

Now that I look back at speaking in tongues, I see clearly that it's just a psychological phenomena. In charismatic circles there is never any foreign language spoken as written in the Book of Acts. Top scientists and psychologists who have studied glossolalia have determined that all it is is a compilation of different syllables that the mind knows or that the person has heard someone else say in tongues and it comes out as gibberish. It feels good—it's like smoking pot.

I think a human being can produce visions with their own mind. I think people can produce religious experiences with their own mind—depending on what they believe. I went through a visionary experience almost when I first spoke in tongues. Now I realize it was a product of my own mind.

Pretty soon I started having psychological problems. At times I thought God was talking to me. I thought I saw Jesus three or four times. I thought I saw angels. I thought the Devil was talking to me at times. It was terrible—I went through hell. I thought I was being attacked by demons—now I take the Buddhist view that



evil is caused by ignorance. It got to the point where I was losing my mind. I went to several counsellors for help. I went to one preacher and he was more concerned with a women's meeting than with what I was going through. It got worse and worse.

We went to Idaho and then we went to Arizona and lived down there for six months. Then we went back to Tenasket. I got worse and worse until finally my wife left. She set up for me to go to this ranch and work out there for the church. Finally I went to San Juan Capistrano, California, and stayed there with my mother. I stayed down there and hung on to my Christianity through thick and thin and I finally reached my low down there where I was almost ready for the nut house. I was confused, nervous and afraid.

I went up to see Tamara two or three times and everytime I showed up, she threatened to call the police. I'll never forget how everyone treated me like shit then - my wife, the people in the church. It still hurts. I haven't seen my daughter since March, 1983. I miss my daughter a lot, but I don't know what to do. After we got converted, we changed my daughter's name to Sarah Grace - not legally, just verbally. She'll always be Julia Mary Morning Bird to me. I don't want a Judeo-Christian name on her - not ever.

Finally I got \$1000 from the sale of my mother's house. I was still a Christian, but I started wondering. The Baptists said the Pentecostals were wrong. The Pentecostals said the Baptists were wrong. Jesus Only Pentecostals said Trinitarian Pentecostals were wrong. And of course all non-Christians were doomed to hell. I couldn't believe all my friends were in hell. A lot of the psychological fear that I felt had its roots in the death of Bear and Kilo. I identified my fear with Christian mythology.

After I got the money from the house, I went to New Mexico. But I stayed only a month or two and went back. I moved to Las Vegas, Nevada and worked at the Sands and at Caesar's Palace



during the strike - still going through psychological turmoil, although I was 90% better.

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Finally I made enough money to fly up to Montana. I saw Chuck Windson and Patty and Peter Schappy and Sunny and Tony Angel. I rented a house. I couldn't find any work, so I went back to Vegas. I helped my mother move and then decided to go to the California Gathering. I had a good time at the gathering. I was hanging on to my Christianity till three days after I left the gathering. I realized - or started to realize - that I no longer believed in the mythological concepts of Christianity. I saw how a man like Barry's friend Perry could live a good moral life without believing in God.

I felt the scientific evidence outweighed the theological evidence. I'd done a lot of reading of mythologies of ancient people. There were many different dying and rising gods before Jesus showed up. There were also many dualistic religions like Zoroastrianism before Christianity. Also I find it very strange that quite a few of the prophecies that Christians use for Christ in the Old Testament had no reference to an anointed king. I could see how these writings were taken out of context and used to back up the Christ myth.

All of a sudden I felt like I'd hit reality. All I'd ever seen all my life was people and nature. I had never seen any supernatural occurrences. The Bible is full of supernatural occurrences, therefore my own common sense told me it was mythology. Science has also proven that man did evolve. I am an atheist. I believe I exist. I believe the universe exists. I believe we are responsible for our own actions. And I believe that we should do the best we can.

I don't believe in God. I don't believe in Jesus. I don't believe in the Devil. I don't believe in ghosts. I don't believe in Krishna. I don't believe in Buddha - though I like Buddha - or Mohammed or the Koran or the I Ching or Tarot cards - or Ronald Reagan. I just believe in me. I believe that humans created their gods.

I've been more left-wing since I left the gathering than I ever have been in my life - more concerned with what's going on



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in Nicaragua, what's going on in El Salvador-not just rap.

Now I'm living in Santa Fe. I'm going to work until I have enough money to accomplish what I want. This is Phil Halfhill signing off.

[The latest report is that Phil believes in God again and has married Vicki Golden Bear, whose life story appears later in this book.]